

# Student dies from brain hemorrhage



## Memorial service planned for this afternoon

**Chelsea Merta** | IDS | 9/18/2007

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A 17-year-old IU student passed away early this morning, from what appears to have been a brain hemorrhage caused by a severe allergic reaction to something he ate.

Police responded to a medical assistance call at McNutt Delgado early Sunday morning when freshman Kareem Bacchus' roommate called the police, IU Police Department Captain Jerry Minger said.

"He had informed his friends that he was having an allergic reaction to something he ate at Malibu Grill," Minger said. "When the symptoms became worse very quickly, they called for help."

Bacchus was known to his friends at IU as a very talented and socially engaged student, Dean of Students Dick McKaig said. "He was elected vice president of McNutt, was very involved in coordinating the 9/11 memorial at McNutt and was a direct-admit student to Kelly School of Business."

A memorial service is planned for today from 4-7 p.m. in the Indiana Memorial Union Gregorian Room, hosted by the Muslim Student Union, of which Bacchus was a member.

MSU President Myeda Hussain encourages everyone who knew Bacchus to attend to remember him and to honor his memory.

"We hope that those who knew Kareem will come to celebrate the life and tragic departure of a young, wonderful person," Hussain said.

Hussain also said that the family requests that friends honor Bacchus by not creating Facebook groups online. Many family members still do not know of Bacchus' condition, Hussain said.

Counselors from Counseling and Psychological Services will also be available at the memorial service to assist students coping with Bacchus' death.

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## LOCAL NEWS TV

### KAREEM BACCHUS: 1990-2007

Indiana University freshman remembered for charisma, love of life

12:00 AM CDT on Thursday, September 20, 2007

By JAKE BATSELL / The Dallas Morning News  
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Nearly two days after Kareem Bacchus died at an Indiana hospital, stunned friends kept showering him with text messages.

"I know you won't get this, but I love you and wish only that you rest in peace," read one message sent to Kareem's cellphone on Wednesday. "Thanks for being so amazing every day of your life."

The popular 17-year-old graduate of Plano West Senior High School fell unconscious Saturday night, after playing tennis at Indiana University, where he was a freshman. He was placed on life support and died early Tuesday.

Family members said Kareem may have suffered a severe allergic reaction, possibly to something he ate, although official autopsy results are weeks away.

Police said friends helped Kareem back to his dorm room to administer allergy medicine, but his condition worsened.

Kareem was allergic to seafood, dairy products and peanuts, said his mother, Ann Bacchus. He was hospitalized this month for another allergic food reaction.

His sudden death reverberated from Bloomington, Ind., to Plano to Austin.

Loved ones in all three cities organized memorial services in his honor this week, as tributes continued to flow on the Internet and into his cellphone inbox.

Friends and family on Wednesday recalled Kareem's energetic personality and his smooth, deep baritone singing voice.

He was the lead bass for the Plano West choir and also performed in a separate mixed ensemble.

"He had a lot of charisma," his mother said. "Kareem loved the limelight. He loved being on stage. He totally lit up."

A versatile singer, Kareem was equally comfortable belting out the songs of Johnny Cash, Frank Sinatra and Elton John. Friends downloaded his songs on their iPods and watched videos of his solo

performances on YouTube.

"You couldn't miss him, with the laughter and all the happiness of his being," said Kathy Hackett, head of choral activities at Plano West. "When he sang, the happiness was glowing."

Hansini Sharma, a longtime Plano friend who attends the University of Texas at Austin, said Kareem tackled everything "with a full heart," from friendships to academics to his role in the school musical, *West Side Story*.

"His optimism helped me be more optimistic," said Ms. Sharma, 18. "You would never see him without his huge smile plastered across his face."

Ms. Sharma said about 30 people gathered at UT this week to share memories of Kareem.

Indiana students have arranged at least two memorial services in his honor, said Dick McKaig, Indiana's dean of students.

Kareem quickly made his mark in Bloomington. Classmates elected him vice president of his dormitory, which is home to more than 1,000 students. And he won direct admission to Indiana's Kelley School of Business, which lets in only a small number of freshmen.

"Academically, he stood out," Dr. McKaig said. "Socially, he stood out. It's a very, very sad thing."

Kareem's mother said her son wanted to study in Spain and ultimately hoped to pursue a career in international business.

His interests extended well beyond singing – he played tennis, earned a black belt in tae kwon do and worked as a lifeguard and mall clothing store employee.

But friends and family said Kareem's enthusiasm and compassion were more impressive than his accomplishments.

"He was full of life – very caring, very loving," said his father, Fazal Bacchus.

"I was privileged to have him as a son," Ms. Bacchus said. "He taught me more than I taught him. He just believed there was good in anybody."

In addition to his parents, survivors include his younger brother, Zain, two grandmothers and numerous aunts, uncles and cousins.

Services begin today with a viewing from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Rahma Funeral Home, 7810 W. Spring Valley Road in Dallas. Final rites are scheduled for 1:45 p.m. at the Dallas Central Mosque, 840 Abrams Road in Richardson, followed by a procession and burial at 2:30 p.m. at Restland Cemetery, 9220 Restland Road in Dallas.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to the Asthma & Allergy Foundation of America or the Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network.

# Freshman dies after suffering allergic reaction



## Student died Tuesday after several days on respirator

Chelsea Merta | IDS | 9/19/2007

The death of IU freshman Kareem Bacchus shocked his friends and family Tuesday morning, when the 17-year-old apparently suffered a brain hemorrhage caused after being treated for an allergic reaction to something he ate on Saturday evening.

Police responded to a medical assistance call from Bacchus' roommate Sunday morning in McNutt Quad, IU Police Department Captain Jerry Minger said.

"He had informed his friends that he was having an allergic reaction to something he ate at Malibu Grill," Minger said. "When the symptoms became worse very quickly, they called for help."

Bacchus was transported to Bloomington Hospital early Sunday morning, where he remained until he passed away shortly after midnight Tuesday. Monroe County Coroner David Toumey said the official cause of death would not be announced for several weeks.

Bacchus' friends confirmed that he had a severe allergy to seafood and lactic acid, a compound found in milk products. Officials and his family, however did not disclose what he ate that caused the reaction.

Malibu Grill declined to comment on the incident.

Bacchus, known to his friends at IU as a talented and socially engaged student, was commended by Dean of Students Dick McKaig.

"He was elected vice president of McNutt and was a direct admit student to Kelley School of Business," McKaig said.

A memorial service was held Tuesday in the Georgian Room of the Indiana Memorial Union by the Muslim Student Union, of which Bacchus was a member.

The group's president, Myeda Hussain, encouraged all of Bacchus' friends to attend to honor him.

Hussain also said the family

requests that friends honor Bacchus by not creating Facebook groups online. Many family members still do not know of Bacchus' condition, Hussain said.

ENLARGE IMAGE



Kareem Bacchus, a 17-year-old freshman, died shortly past midnight Tuesday after suffering from a brain hemorrhage.

Bacchus' friends from his hometown Plano, Texas, also attended the memorial service, praising Bacchus' personality and talents.

"He had a beautiful singing voice, a bass, and very low," IU freshman Molly Langteau said. "He was personable and always trying to help people."

Freshman Emily Stern added to Langteau's sentiments, saying that "he was very, very smart and actually skipped a grade. He was only 17, and was a direct admit into the business school."

Langteau also said that Bacchus had played a large role in coordinating the 9/11 memorial service at McNutt last week, by singing the national anthem and gathering more than 200 students.

"We didn't get to know him that well," Stern said. "But that didn't matter to him. He would have done anything for us. We didn't know him that well, but he touched our lives."

Langteau echoed Stern's words.

"He could have been a leader, and he could have done something amazing," she said. "He could have cured the very allergies that he suffered from."

Counseling and Psychological Services representative Dr. Nancy Stockton was available at the memorial service, and reminds students touched by Bacchus that CAPS has walk-in hours from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on weekdays, and offers an emergency response team for all tragedies.

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